REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 25, 27, 29 and 38 have been canceled. Claims 20-27, 29-39 and 40-46 are active in the case. Claims 20-24, 26, 30-37 and 39 are withdrawn from consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants' representative wishes to thank Examiners Nguyen and Douyon for the helpful and courteous discussion of May 20, 2008. As a result of the discussion, it is believed that the issues in the case have been clarified and that the prosecution of the case has been advanced.

Prior Art Rejection, 35 USC 102

Claims 40-43, 45 and 46 stand rejected based on 35 USC 102(a) as anticipated by Takagi et al, U.S. Patent 6,447,696. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Takagi et al patent discloses a graft copolymer which finds utility as a scale inhibitor or a detergent additive. The graft copolymer of the reference is prepared by grafting one or more of certain graftable monomers onto a polyether compound (A). An indispensable graft monomer is vinylpyrrolidone (b1). Other graftable monomers include those selected from the groups identified as monomers (b2-1) and (b2-2). Monomers (b2-2) include vinylimidazole, 2-vinylpyridine and 4-vinylpyridine. Thus, a possible graft copolymer product is one in which the monomers grafted onto polymer compound (A) contain imidazole units and pyrrolidone units. However, whatever pyrrolidone unit containing polyether material of the reference is used, it is selectively used as either a scale inhibitor or a detergent additive (for the washing of clothes or textiles). On the other hand, the present invention is directed to two method or process embodiments which reside in a field of technology unrelated to the washing of textiles or clothes. The two method or process embodiments are the stripping of off-shade dyeings from textiles and the leveling of dyeing of a textile. That is,

the graft copolymer of the invention is used as an auxiliary to treat a textile that is either in the process of being printed or dyed or has undergone such a kind of process. Thus, one of skill in the field of the present invention would be a person working in a textile dyeing or textile printing business. This stands in contrast to one of skill in the art to which the disclosure of the cited patent pertains, who may be an operator of a laundromat or a citizen operating a clothes washer.

In order to emphasize the distinction between fields of use, applicants have amended Claim 40 to recite a process of treating a dyed textile in order to remove or strip off-shade dyeings from a dyed textile material. (The amending language that has been employed finds basis in the disclosure of the specification on pages 20 and 21.) Accordingly, amended Claim 40 specifies a method of treating such dyed textile material with an aqueous liquor that is comprised of the graft copolymer as defined in the present text and other ingredients of one or more of dispersants, reducing agents and colloids. (This is the composition claimed in Claim 45.) Stripping of off-shade dyeings from a dyed textile is thereby accomplished by the treatment under the stated conditions claimed. Claim 40 is therefore believed distinguished over the cited Takagi et al patent.

Claim 42 is also believed patentably distinguished over the cited reference which does no show or suggest a method of leveling the dyeing of textiles.

As stated above, the composition of Claim 45 is distinguished over the prior art, because the components of the composition are used to formulate an aqueous liquor that effects the stripping operation as set forth in Claim 40. Withdrawal of the rejection of the claims is respectfully requested.

Support for the amendments to Claims 41, 43, and 46, which depend on Claims 40, 42, and 45, respectively, is found in the specification at page 4, lines 27–28.

Prior Art Rejection, 35 USC 103

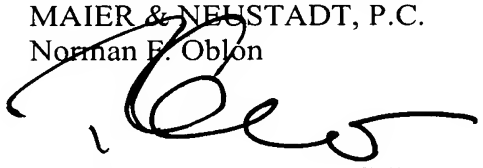
Claim 44 stands rejected based on 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Takagi et al, U.S. Patent 6,447,696. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 44 is directed to a secondary aspect of the invention upon which patentability does not depend. Accordingly, since the claim is dependent upon a claim which is believed to be patentably distinguished over the cited and applied patent, it too is distinguished over the patent.

It is now believed that the application is in proper condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
Norman F. Oblon



Richard L. Treanor
Registration No. 36,379

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)